

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 240147

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TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY'S PARTY

TOSEC 456

E.O.11652:GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS, PK

SUBJT: NEW COALITION: IMPACT ON NEGOTIATIONS

REF: TEL AVIV 6230

1. RETURN TO ISRAELI CABINET OF THE NRP DOES GIVE RABIN
ADDED STRENGTH IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS BUT ALSO CLEARLY REDUCES
HIS MANEUVERING ROOM IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY ON
THE WEST BANK ISSUE. THOUGH NRP HAS ACCEPTED COALITION
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 240147

DISCIPLINE ON QUESTIONS OF TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS AND

ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY, ITS VERY PRESENCE IN CABINET WILL INCREASE PRESSURE FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH ADDITIONAL SETTLEMENTS ON WEST BANK (NRP MEMBERS WERE INVOLVED IN RECENT ATTEMPTS ESTABLISH ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS) AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, REDUCE RABIN'S AB INITIO MANEUVERING ROOM IN ANY NEGOTIATION ON WEST BANK. TO SOME EXTENT, THE SAME IS TRUE OF GOLAN NEGOTIATIONS BUT NOT OF SINAI TALKS. NRP LEADERS WILL TEND TO VIEW SINAI NEGOTIATION THROUGH SECULAR, SECURITY-TINTED GLASSES AND NOT THROUGH RELIGIOUS-HISTORICAL LENSES WITH WHICH THEY SEE WEST BANK. GOLAN, TOO, SEEN AS SECURITY ISSUE IN NRP, BUT PARTY'S POSITION TENDS TO BE MORE HARD-LINE THAN ON SINAI.

2. ON WEST BANK ISSUE (WHICH WE REALIZE RABAT SUMMIT RESULTS HAVE PUSHED OFF INTO FUTURE), SHOULD RABIN BE SEEN BY NRP TO BE MOVING TOWARD SUBSTANTIAL CONCESSIONS, OR BE SUSPECTED OF THIS IF HE ATTEMPTS KEEP DETAILS FROM FULL CABINET, NRP COULD QUIT GOI BEFORE COMPLETION OF NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WOULD HAVE EFFECT OF ABORTING NEGOTIATIONS BY INDUCING PREMATURE NATIONAL FUROR, PERHAPS INCLUDING NEED FOR ELECTIONS, WHICH GOI WOULD HOPE NOT TO FACE UNTIL WEST BANK DEAL ACTUALLY READY TO BE SIGNED. THREAT TO ABORT NEGOTIATIONS BY DEFECTION FROM GOVERNMENT, WHETHER OR NOT MADE EXPLICIT, IS LIKELY TO LIMIT RABIN'S FLEXIBILITY IN ANY WEST BANK TALKS.

3. THOUGH RABIN IS KNOWN TO FEEL THAT TRADITIONAL LABOR PARTY DICTUM THAT NRP EASIER TO HANDLE WITHIN GOI THAN IN OPPOSITION STILL TRUE, IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, IN OUR VIEW, WHETHER CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES OVER PAST YEAR HAVE NOT ALSO CHANGED THIS BIT OF POLITICAL WISDOM. NRP LEADERSHIP WILL BE UNDER FIRE FROM ITS YOUTH FACTION AS WELL AS, OVER LONGER TERM, UNDER THREAT OF GENUINE SPLIT IN NRP OVER WEST BANK ISSUE IF LEADERS WERE TO STICK WITH RABIN AS HE PREPARED GIVE UP ANY SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF BIBLICAL ISRAEL. THOUGH NRP LEADERS ACCEPTED BREACH OF PARTY DISCIPLINE BY TWO MEMBERS WHO DID NOT ACCEPT NEW COALITION OCT 30, WE FEEL IT DOUBTFUL THAT LEADERS WOULD REMAIN IN GOVERNMENT IF AN ISSUE IN DISPUTE--SUCH AS WEST BANK CONCESSIONS--CLEARLY PRESAGED DISSOLUTION OF NRP.

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PAGE 03 STATE 240147

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